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NOMINATION—AMTRAK

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

NOMINATIONS

APRIL 19, 1990

TOMMY G. THOMPSON, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORP. (AMTRAK)

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Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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NOMINATION—AMTRAK

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1990

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m. in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. J. James Exon presiding.

Staff members assigned to this hearing: Sheryl Webber Washington and Becky Kojm, professional staff members; and Ruth Johnson, minority professional staff member.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR EXON

Senator EXON. The committee will please come to order.

Could we shut the door, please?

Senator Thurmond, welcome.

Senator Thurmond, we welcome you as a guest of the committee. You can sit right here on the wrong side of the table, or you can sit over here. This is the Republican side, but you are welcome either way. Sit down.

This morning the Commerce Committee meets to consider the nomination by the President of Governor Tommy G. Thompson of Wisconsin to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation. The advice and consent role of the Senate is one that we take very seriously. Governor Thompson's appointment is one of three on Amtrak's nine-member board made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Congress remains committed to a national rail passenger system. Currently, the House and Senate are close to completing conference action on legislation to reauthorize Amtrak. That is an annual process that we go through up here. I applaud Amtrak for the steady progress that it has made to date in covering its operation costs under the leadership of Graham Claytor.

As we consider this nomination, Amtrak is at a crucial juncture in terms of needed capital improvements. As the chief executive of Wisconsin, I am sure Governor Thompson is familiar with the issues such as the need for predictable capital funding, improving services and operations as well as maintaining good relationships with the communities that Amtrak serves, all challenges that Amtrak faces continually on a daily basis.

The committee will consider Governor Thompson's nomination carefully, keeping in mind the tremendous responsibility the Amtrak Board of Directors has to ensure that national rail passen-

ger service is maintained while the corporation continues to improve its financial and operating performance.

I understand that the Ranking Member of the Surface Transportation Subcommittee, my friend and working colleague, Senator Kasten, and the junior Senator from Wisconsin, my friend and colleague, Senator Kohl, are here. I welcome both of you.

Following proper procedure, I will first recognize the senior Senator from Wisconsin, Senator Kasten. You may proceed with any opening remarks that you have with regard to your governor.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR KASTEN

Senator KASTEN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for having this hearing. Let me say at the outset that I agree with the statement you just made with regard to capital improvements for Amtrak. I think that we in the Senate have to work together, and I think that we can do it on a bipartisan basis to help Amtrak get the capital improvements that it needs, which will, in effect, make it efficient and make it possible to break even, I believe, in the next couple of years.

At one point, we have to inject this capital, and I know that you and I working on the Surface Transportation Subcommittee together recognize that need, and I hope that we can do it this year.

I am honored, Mr. Chairman, to be here to introduce my friend, Governor Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin. Tommy Thompson is a talented attorney who would bring almost 25 years of public service to the Amtrak Board. He served in the Wisconsin State Assembly from 1966 to 1987 and in other positions in local and State government.

He has compiled an outstanding record of public service since becoming governor in 1987. It has been a pleasure to work with him on a whole host of Wisconsin-related matters, including maintaining Amtrak's Empire Builder service through Wisconsin and increasing the number of commuter trains between Milwaukee and Chicago, an issue on which we continue to work with Graham Claytor and others at Amtrak.

Governor Thompson has worked to improve Wisconsin's rail passenger system. He has received the Friend of the Passenger Award from the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers, and has worked closely with this group of people, as have I and others of us in elected office in Wisconsin.

Governor Thompson is an outstanding and a proven leader. He is exceptionally well-qualified to sit on Amtrak's Board, and I am sure he will be a strong and, most importantly, reasoned voice for the concerns of the states on the Amtrak Board. He is going to represent concerns of governors and states throughout the country.

I look forward, Mr. Chairman, to working with you so that this nomination can receive quick approval by the full committee and the Senate and we can proceed with dispatch on this nomination. I strongly endorse this nomination, and I hope that our committee can move quickly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator EXON. Thank you, Senator Kasten. Thank you also for being a very effective Member of our committee as a whole. I am

proud to serve with you as the Ranking Member of the Surface Transportation Subcommittee.

It is my pleasure now to introduce and welcome not a Member of our committee but certainly a very important Member of the United States Senate with whom I have enjoyed working very much since the people of Wisconsin sent him in to represent them in the United States Senate.

Herb Kohl is a proven successful businessman, and when we come to such matters as Amtrak and many of the other jurisdictions of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, it is always good to have people with proven and successful business experience.

Let me take this opportunity, Senator Kohl, to tell you that if you ever have an opportunity at any time in the future to join this committee of business, I guess, more than any other of the committees of the United States Senate, we will certainly welcome your interest in that position. I am particularly glad to see that you are here today to help introduce Governor Thompson who has been recommended by the President.

I am pleased to recognize you now, Senator Kohl.

STATEMENT OF HON. HERBERT KOHL, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator KOHL. Thank you, Senator Exon. I am pleased to be here, now for two reasons. That is the nicest introduction I have had since I have been here. I appreciate that very much.

Senator EXON. I said exactly what you told me to say.

Senator KOHL. I will get you next time.

I am very pleased to be here also to second the nominating of Governor Thompson to be on the Board of Directors of Amtrak. He has been a very, very successful governor in Wisconsin. He has demonstrated executive ability. He has run the state most successfully over the past four years. He has managed to fiscally show tremendous responsibility. I think that is one of the main criteria and one of the main things we will be looking for on the Board of Directors of Amtrak, people who are executives with proven records of fiscal responsibility and success. He has those things. I have no doubt that he is going to be a very productive, useful member of the Board of Directors.

I think perhaps, if possible, what they should try to do is get him to work full-time on that job. I think he would be a very good full-time member of the commission.

Be that as it may, however much time he is able to devote to the job, he will do it successfully, and I have every confidence that he will be approved. I am proud to be here in support of his nomination.

Senator EXON. Thank you very much, Senator Kohl.

There are lots of demand on Senators' time these days. I would welcome both you and Senator Kasten to stay and join us at this table now if you care to, if your time allows.

In any event, I am very pleased with those fine introductions to recognize the Governor of Wisconsin, Governor Thompson, for any opening statements you have.

I have a statement that Senator Hollings would like to have included in the record.

[The statement, biographical sketch and prehearing questions and answers follow:]

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

This morning I am pleased to welcome Governor Tommy G. Thompson, of Wisconsin, who has been nominated by President Bush to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, more often called Amtrak. Governor Thompson's appointment comes at an important time for Amtrak, as the corporation continues its successful drive towards greater independence from Federal funding, while acknowledging the current need for significant capital investments.

As our transportation networks become increasingly congested, Amtrak will continue to play an important role in resolving some of our future transportation problems. In previous years, Congress has shown its commitment to maintain a viable rail passenger transportation system. I believe now is the time to reiterate our commitment to Amtrak as budget constraints threaten the proper maintenance of the railroad. As a governor, I'm sure Governor Thompson has been faced with the similar difficulty of balancing different interests to meet the needs of his state. I hope Governor Thompson realizes the position for which he has been nominated is an important one in which the future of Amtrak will be determined. With that, I would like to add that a good working relationship between all interested parties is important.

The Committee will carefully review Governor Thompson's nomination.

ERNEST F. HOLLINGS, SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN
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WALTER B. McCORMICK, JR., MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL AND STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

STATEMENT FOR COMPLETION BY PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES

(If more space is needed, please use attached REMARKS sheet)

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Name: Thompson (Last) Tommy (First) George (Other)

   Address: 99 Cambridge Road (Current residence) 115 East, State Capitol (Business)

   Madison, Wisconsin 53704 Madison, Wisconsin 53707

2. Position to which nominated: Nat'l Railroad Pssgr. Corp. Bd. of Dir Date of nomination: January 3, 1990

3. Date of birth: November 19, 1941 (month) (day) (year) Place of birth: Elroy, Wisconsin

4. Marital status: Married Full name of Spouse: Sue Ann Thompson (Mashak)

5. Names and ages of children: Kelli Sue Thompson 20

   Tommi Noel Thompson 19

   Jason Thomas Thompson 15

6. Education:

Institution	Dates attended	Degrees received	Dates of degrees
University of Wisconsin Law School	1963-66	Juris Doctor	May, 1966
Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison	1959-63	Bachelor of Science	May, 1963

7. Employment record: List all positions held since college, including the title or description of job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of inclusive employment.

From	To	Name of employer	Address	Type of work
1966-1986		Thompson & Schuh	207 E. State St., Mauston, WI	Law Practice
1966-1986		State of Wisconsin	Assembly Chamber Madison, WI 53708	State Assemblyman 42nd District
1987-Present		State of Wisconsin	115 East, State Capitol Madison, WI 53707	Governor

8. Government experience: List any experience in or direct association with Federal, State, or local governments including any advisory, consultative, honorary or other part-time service or positions.

See entries above (2&3)

Also:

Member Juneau County Board of Supervisors 1971-74

Student Intern, Office of Congressman Vernon Thomson, 1962-63

9. Political affiliations activities: List all memberships and offices held in or financial contributions and services rendered to all political parties or election committees during the last 10 years.

Governor Thompson served as Honorary Co-Chairman of the Bush/Quayle 1988 Campaign. He has also been involved in the support of many candidates for State Senate and Assembly seats since 1966.

10. Memberships: List all memberships and offices held in professional, fraternal, scholarly, civic, charitable, and other organizations.

1966-1989 Member, State Bar of Wisconsin

1966-1968 Member, Mauston, WI Jaycees

1967-1970 Member, Oxford, WI Lions Club

1985-1989 Member, Union Center, WI Knights of Columbus

1986-1989 Member, Mauston, WI Moose Club

1985-1989 Member, Waukesha, WI Elks Club

AMTRAK BOARD CONFIRMATION HEARING OF APRIL 19, 1990

COMMITTEE QUESTION #1

What do you believe should be Amtrak's top priorities now and in the future?

ANSWERS

*Amtrak must continue to increase its operating revenues and continue to find ways to reduce its operating costs in order to achieve self-sufficiency, e.g. no federal operating assistance by the year 2000.

*Amtrak must develop a reliable and predictable source of funding to allow it to replace worn out equipment and upgrade its physical plant and facilities.

*Amtrak must forge a new partnership with the federal government, state government and the private sector in order to meet its mission of providing a national rail passenger network connecting our nation's major metropolitan areas.

AMTRAK BOARD CONFIRMATION HEARING OF APRIL 19, 1990

COMMITTEE QUESTION #2

As the State Governors' representative on the Amtrak Board, in what ways would you hope to influence the relationship between Amtrak and States?

ANSWERS

- The states will be key players in implementing the nation's transportation programs for the 21st century. Because Amtrak is an integral part of our country's transportation system of national signifigance, the appropriate maintenance and possible enhancement of intercity rail passenger services under Amtrak can only occur through a reinvigorated federal-state partnership.

- The states and the federal government must do a better job of analyzing the trade-offs in investments between alternative modes of transportation. The trade-offs between high speed ground transportation services and air services between cities must be scrutinized.

- The states and the federal government must do a better job of analyzing how the ground transportation mode can be used to complement and enhance the air transport mode. How do we maximize our collective future investments in rail and air passenge capital facilities and operating networks?

AMTRAK BOARD CONFIRMATION HEARING OF APRIL 19, 1990

COMMITTEE QUESTION # 3

Some have argued that instead of a nationwide transportation system, Amtrak service should be limited to high-density areas such as the Northeast Corridor. What are your views on this position and on the need for rail passenger transportation outside of the Northeast Corridor?

ANSWERS

*By definition, Amtrak is to provide rail passenger service in the major intercity travel markets of the United States. The Northeast Corridor is not the only major intercity travel market in this country. In the mid-west for example, we have a series of major corridors eminating form Chicago like spokes on a wheel. They include: Chicago to Milwaukee, Chicago to Detroit, Chicago to Detroit, Chicago to Indianapolis, Chicago to St. Louis, and Chicago to Minneapolis-St. Paul.

*If Amtrak service were to be limited to the Northeast Corriodor, then Amtrak should be transformed from a corporation whose major stockholder is the U.S. Government to a regional rail authority.

*As recent events in California-Nevada, Florida and Texas have shown, the federal government does not have an exclusive role in meeting surface transporation needs in high travel density corriodors. There seems to be ample opportunity for private sector involvement and this potential must be tapped to the maximum extent possible.

AMTRAK BOARD CONFIRMATION HEARING OF APRIL 19, 1990

COMMITTEE QUESTION #4

How would you improve Amtrak's facilities and services?

ANSWERS

*Amtrak must continue to find ways to become more cost-effective in the delivery of its services in order to maximize the amount of service it can provide with the dollars available to do so.

*Amtrak's current policy of setting fares to maximize total passenger fare revenues should be continued.

*Amtrak should continue to explore ways to reduce unit operating costs. The repeal of burdensome statutory requirements which unnecessarily inflate Amtrak's cost of doing business is a prime example of something which could be accomplished relatively quickly.

*Amtrak's physical plant and rolling stock must be replaced and upgraded on a schedule which conforms to sound business practice.

*Amtrak must aggressively market its products and services.

STATEMENT OF HON. TOMMY G. THOMPSON

Governor THOMPSON. Thank you very much, Senator Exon. It is indeed an honor for me and certainly a pleasure. This is the first time in 25 years of public service that I have had the privilege to appear in front of a Senate committee, especially one that is chaired by a former governor. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be here.

I would like to say at the outset that I am indeed honored by the fine comments that Senator Kasten has given me as well as Senator Kohl. Both of those Senators, of course, are doing an outstanding job representing the State of Wisconsin in the Nation, and I am indeed humbled and very honored by their presence here and their introduction.

I am pleased, Mr. Chairman and Senator Kasten, to be here today to answer any questions that you might have on my nomination by President Bush to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

"Forward" is the motto of the State of Wisconsin. Forward is the direction I think all of us together, collectively, as Senator Kasten

has indicated, on a bipartisan basis should go in meeting the enormous transportation needs of this Nation if we are to maintain our quality of life and remain competitive in the global marketplace.

As President Bush recently said in unveiling the national transportation policy, on the ground, over the waterways and air and in space, our mission for the next decade and the next century is to ensure connections among all parts of the United States and with the world.

The preamble to the National Transportation Policy states, "As we begin a new decade and prepare for the 21st century, the United States must renew its commitment to maintaining our transportation system as the finest in the world. We are entering an era in which our ability to compete internationally is critical to our economic vitality and quality of life. To meet the changing demands of the international marketplace, we must have safe, efficient transportation to carry people where they want to go and to move the vast quantities of goods we produce and consume. Projected transportation needs for the 21st century eclipse our present public and private sector programs. We broaden the base of support for transportation, reinvigorate investment, and tap new sources of ideas and capital to meet growing demands."

I endorse that vision for the future and the themes articulated by my good friend, Samuel K. Skinner, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation in his report, *Moving America: New Directions, New Opportunities.*

I believe that the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, better known as Amtrak, has absolutely a vital role to play in keeping America moving. It is our country's intercity ground passenger transportation system of national significance.

Let me make it clear that I am a strong proponent of a national rail passenger system and would oppose proposals to restructure it to serve only the Northeast Corridor and a selected few short line routes as well.

Amtrak is deserving of continued but not exclusive financial support from the Federal Government. Amtrak occupies a unique niche in the intercity travel marketplace and definitely has a bright future in helping to resolve our transportation congestion challenges.

I applaud the objectives laid out by Graham Claytor, President and Chairman of the Board of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, to wean Amtrak from the Federal operating subsidies by the year 2000. In fact, if I am confirmed by this committee and by the United States Senate, I will be working with Mr. Claytor to see if we can accomplish this before the year 2000. I applaud Mr. Claytor for the job that he has done since taking over the helm of Amtrak in 1982.

As a member of the Amtrak Board of Directors, I will be forward, as the motto of Wisconsin, in advancing new ideas and new concepts. For example, I believe the states can and should play a greater creative role in supporting Amtrak as we have in Wisconsin for extra passenger services to achieve its basic mission of providing rail passenger services between cities.

As we look ahead into the next decade, we must forge new partnerships between the Federal Government, Amtrak, the states and

the private sector to make sure that our Nation's rail passenger system is more efficient and more effective.

As the governors' representative on the Amtrak Board of Directors, I will advance these new concepts with my fellow governors individually and collectively to the National Governors Association.

I note for the record that your governor, Kay Orr, is the Chairman of the Transportation Committee for the Governors Association. I am a member of that committee, and I am Chairman of the International Relations Committee. We work very closely on Amtrak and other transportation needs for the good of our country.

I am especially interested in exploring ways to expand the basic Federal service and major transportation corridors to provide an alternative to the crowded airports and highways. We need to tap the full potential rail passenger services and provide corridors like Chicago-Detroit, Chicago-St. Louis, and, of course, Chicago-Milwaukee and Omaha through Denver and beyond.

In addition to forging new partnerships, as a member of the Amtrak Board of Directors I would want the National Railroad Passenger Corporation to do the following:

Continue to set fair policies to maximize farebox revenues;

Develop and implement a stronger capital investment program which will allow Amtrak to actually and finally fulfill its primary mission;

Define Amtrak's role in operating high speed rail services in these corridors where travel is sufficient to warrant such services; and

Reexamine Amtrak's role in subsidizing what are essentially commuter rail services in certain metropolitan areas of the country. I believe my track record as governor proves that I can deliver on my promises. I intend to devote a good share of my time to being a good Board member if I am confirmed and appreciate the support that is already shown by you, Mr. Chairman, and by Senator Kasten and Senator Kohl.

In October of last year, I inaugurated the expansion of rail passenger services between Chicago and Milwaukee and points in between. This was done under contract with Amtrack under Section 403(b) of the Rail Passenger Services Act. Never before in its history had the State of Wisconsin put its money where it mouth was in supporting rail passenger services.

On February 21 of this year, I announced that the State of Wisconsin had worked out an agreement with our neighboring states of Illinois and Minnesota to conduct a preliminary study of high speed rail service between the Milwaukee-Chicago metro complex and Minneapolis-St. Paul. We're going to take a hard look at the feasibility of any high speed rail system. If the study shows the potential exists, then we will develop the methods and funding to conduct a full-blown feasibility study of how, when, and where a high speed rail service could be built and put into service.

I thank you once again for allowing me to appear this morning in making this statement, and I am now free and willing to answer any questions that you might have.

Senator EXON. Governor, thank you very much. I cannot tell you how pleased I am that the President has nominated you to take the

place of Governor Orr, who has resigned. Governor Orr did a very fine job, I think, as a member of the Amtrak board. With your statement, qualifications and background, I believe that you will play a vital role when confirmed by the United States Senate.

Thank you for the nice statement you made about Graham Claytor. We think he has done an outstanding job. I think the record shows that. Those of us who have had the great opportunity to serve our states as the chief executive officer recognize leadership when we see it, and we have certainly seen it in Graham Claytor.

I am particularly pleased that you serve with Governor Orr of my state on the Surface Transportation Committee of the National Governors' Association. We have a key role for the states to play as we look to the future of not only rail passenger service but surface transportation in general.

Just as a caveat, let me say that I was called to the White House a month or so ago for the announcement of the new horizons with regard to infrastructure of the United States primarily concerning surface transportation, and I liked what I heard and saw and the administration's description of what they said was a plan.

After listening to that, though, and looking at the funding mechanism, I had to conclude that this was more a statement of goals than it was a plan to improve our infrastructure which, according to the administration, is going to require somewhere between $2 and $3 trillion by the year 2005. It was significantly lacking direction for the role in financing that the Federal Government was destined to play. In fact, the emphasis was on the fact that most or all of this $2 to $3 trillion would have to be supplied by the states and the subdivisions thereof.

Having been a governor as you have, knowing the constraints on the states today and recognizing that the states as a group have been more forthright and upcoming on meeting income spending goals than has the Federal Government, I just do not see how it is possible to saddle any significant portion of the improvement in our infrastructure that has been recommended by the administration.

Specifically, that brings us to Amtrak. I think Amtrak is absolutely essential from every standpoint that I can think of, including the environment, if we are going to maintain an effective and efficient transportation service. If anything, we should be talking about the expansion of Amtrak today rather than maintaining where it is now, which is about as far as our horizons can look to right now given the budget constraints that exist.

Certainly, Amtrak has a very serious problem, in my opinion, in gathering the capital that is going to be necessary to make capital improvements that have to be made to keep that system up to par and keep it moving upward on our eventual goal to have it fully self-sustaining.

I may have a question or two afterwards, but I will be glad to yield now to my friend from Wisconsin, the Ranking Member of the committee, Senator Kasten, for any comments or questions that he might have.

Senator KASTEN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I have no questions, and I made my statement from the other side of the hearing room. I hope that we can move quickly in confirming

Tommy Thompson to be a member of the Amtrak Board. I am confident that he is going to do an outstanding job.

As I said, Mr. Chairman, in my prepared statement, I have worked with Governor Thompson over the years in a number of different capacities, and I think that he is an outstanding choice for this particular post.

I want to agree with you, Mr. Chairman, and I hope that we can deal with the capital improvements necessary for Amtrak. It was not in the President's budget, but I think that working together, those of us on the authorizing committee along with the Appropriations Committee can hopefully help Graham Claytor in the wonderful work that he is doing in coming up with some of the dollars that are needed. At least we can see where things are going to be next year and the year after in terms of the capital improvements that are necessary in order to make Amtrak self-sufficient. It is moving in that direction, but we have to be able to be helpful in terms of the capital improvements. I am confident that we are going to be working together to do that.

I hope that we can move quickly with this nomination, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you very much for holding this hearing.

Senator EXON. Thank you, Senator Kasten.

I just want to advise you, Governor Thompson, that you have my wholehearted support for confirmation, and I think that we will be able to follow up on the suggestions made by Senator Kasten to move this nomination ahead successfully in the very near future.

When we talk about the future of rail passenger transportation service, getting way ahead of the curve, I think that those of you at Amtrak should be at least looking beyond what the immediate capital needs of Amtrak are. I speak specifically of magnetic levitation rail systems which I think most agree are very likely to be the eventual ultimate as far as new in science with regard to rail type passenger service.

While I am not trying to factor that into immediate considerations for Amtrak, I think that the Governors' Association should be taking a look at that, also, as to the role that MAGLEV transportation systems are likely to hold in America in the 21st Century sometime. As past and present governors, you and I have to keep our eyes set a little bit over the horizon from time to time if we are going to make sure that the infrastructure of America is indeed competitive with the ultracompetitive world that we as Americans are going to find ourselves in if not now certainly by the turn of the century.

I would like to ask one question that we might have as to how we can work more closely together as Federal legislators with governors and with the legislatures in the individual states to recognize the need for our transportation system?

We in Nebraska are very fortunate to have three pretty good railroads running through our state, but not all states are that fortunate. Yet, we have some concerns on possible abandonment of some of those lines. The State of Nebraska just in the last legislature has been looking at this problem not only for rail passenger service but for airline passenger service, and it seems to me that it is a time for state officials to become more concerned about all of the transportation systems that go into and out of their states, be-

cause I suspect that states are going to be left out, too, if they do not have the proper infrastructure with regard to moving goods and people.

Therein lies a big challenge to most or all of our states which are going to be competitive with one another as we move into a more competitive world.

Let me ask you this question. Have you in Wisconsin done anything along the lines of the formation of a department or maybe at the insistence of present bureaucracy to do more advance planning and thinking about transportation which for far too long in the states has been concentrated only on how do we build more and better highways with little attention, I suggest, to rail service and airline service?

Do you think that the states as a whole under the leadership of the governors are coming around to the feeling that this is an additional responsibility that they are going to have to be involved in at least from the standpoint of advance planning, advance advice and how to finance what we all pretty much agree on is a must as we look to the future?

Governor THOMPSON. Thank you very much for the question, Senator, because I am dying to answer that question as far as Wisconsin is concerned.

Wisconsin is a leader in advance planning, certainly not taking away anything from your state or any other states. Wisconsin has just entered into an agreement with the States of Minnesota and Illinois. Governor Perpich, myself and my big cousin, Jim Thompson from Illinois, have reached an agreement in which we have all put money in for a high speed rail study between Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. I believe it is the first of its kind in the Nation.

We are looking for the 21st Century, and we are looking at the 21st Century to make sure that we are competitive in the midwest and regionally. I think states all across the board are doing the same thing. Wisconsin is looking at air travel. We have three states, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, who are looking at O'Hare field. We think that the next airport should be at General Mitchell Field in Milwaukee, the expansion of it, and we are of course fighting with Indiana and Illinois about that. We are all in it together looking at ways to expand air travel into the O'Hare corridor.

We are also looking at expanded rail service. Senator Kasten and Mayor Norquist from Milwaukee as well as Governor Jim Thompson and myself entered an agreement to expand Amtrak service, and the State of Wisconsin is picking up the cost. We are subsidizing an expanded passenger service between Chicago and Milwaukee through Kenosha, and it is doing very well. In fact, the subsidy that we have appropriated at the state level probably will not all be utilized.

We are also expanding our harbors in Wisconsin and our mass transit in our individual cities. We are looking for the 21st Century. We also are looking at a study for light rail service in the City of Milwaukee, which is our largest city, from the airport into the heart of the city.

So I think Wisconsin could be a model for the rest of the states to follow as far as expanded study and surveys are concerned, but I think all governors are more in line and more attuned to what you

said, Senator Exon, than ever before. We are united to work in partnerships with the United States Government. We think the trust money should be spent a little bit faster than it has been for expanded transportation needs and infrastructure. We think advance planning is absolutely vital if we are going to be a competitive force in this global economy.

Wisconsin is going to be a leader, and I think other states are following. I think all of us together have a great stake. The one nice thing about transportation needs, they can be handled on a bipartisan basis. It is not a Democrat issue. It is not a Republican issue. It is a people issue and an issue that is so vital to our future. I am dedicated to accomplishing that as governor of the State of Wisconsin and, if I am confirmed, as a member of the Amtrak Board.

Senator EXON. Thank you, Governor. I do not want to correct you as I have to correct people time and time again. The correct pronunciation of my name is Exon, like E-x-s-o-n, Thompson. Exxon are those people who have two crosses in their name.

Governor THOMPSON. I apologize, Senator. I hope that does not take away from your support.

Senator EXON. No, it does not.

I have just one final question. In your prehearing questions you suggested that it was obviously necessary to have increased capital funding for the Amtrak system. I think we all agree on that.

Do you have any suggestions at this time as to what the funding level or sources of funding might be in that area? Do you have any firm feelings on that at this juncture?

Governor THOMPSON. I think Graham Claytor has indicated that if you are going to expand the gasoline tax, one cent out of that should be attributable to capitalization cost for Amtrak. I would support that.

Senator EXON. Just one last comment. As we try to increase Amtrak use and so forth, I will be surprised indeed if at some time in the future when you are on the Board of Amtrak we do not begin to see some different type of cars hooked up to the Amtrak passenger train system. I am sure you will not confirm this today, but being from a state that is major in milk and cheese production, it would seem to me to be a great idea if we had a milk or cheese car on these trains running from one place to another.

We will probably receive resistance on that from Graham Claytor, but it sure would be good for Wisconsin's economy, would it not?

Governor THOMPSON. It surely would be, and I think it is a great idea. I am glad you suggested it, Senator. I will carry that to the Board.

Senator EXON. Thank you very much for your excellent testimony.

Any further questions or comments, Senator Kasten?

With that, Governor Thompson, thanks for being here this morning. We will move this along as quickly as we can. Thank you very much, and we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:10 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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